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TAGS: [CH](#) [KN](#) [KS](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: TAIWAN CAUTIOUS ON DPRK HUMAN RIGHTS

Classified By: Deputy Director Robert S. Wang for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: During recent meetings with a visiting U.S. envoy, Taiwan government and NGO officials displayed little understanding or concern about human rights issues in North Korea. While willing, in principle, to expand cooperation with the United States, local thinktank Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD) staff said limited resources hampered their ability to assist U.S. efforts in any significant way. Neither MOFA nor TFD offered concrete commitments beyond participation in an upcoming Donors, Conference in London. End Summary.

North Korea Not on MOFA's Map

12. (C) MOFA East Asia Pacific (EAP) Deputy Director General Lee Tsung-fen met U.S. Deputy Special Envoy for Human Rights in North Korea Christian Whiton September 30 to discuss Taiwan policies toward the DPRK. A last-minute substitute for her boss, Lee was unfamiliar with the North Korean human rights situation, and, indeed, North Korean issues in general. (This included, at several points during the meeting, misidentifying the leader of North Korea.) In the end, Lee would only commit to monitor the human rights situation in North Korea "closely and cautiously" and to send a TECRO representative to an upcoming Donors, Conference in London. Despite her relative unfamiliarity with the issue, Lee warned that the U.S. approach to North Korea was "too hard" and not in line with Southeast Asian preferences for a "soft" approach. Hardline policy does not guarantee results, she suggested.

NGO Open to Cooperation, but Resources Limited

13. (C) During a meeting earlier in the day, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD) Executive Director Lin Wen-cheng agreed that human rights were linked to regional security and was receptive, in principle, to increased cooperation with the United States on this issue. At the same time, Director Lin said his budget derived almost entirely from the government, whose current budget process left TFD with limited resources and uncertain budgets each year. He made a plea for Whiton to lobby for greater funding from MOFA. While Lin expressed willingness to send a representative to the Donors, Conference in London, logistical difficulties prevented their participation.

Radio Broadcasts Could Be More Effective

14. (C) TFD representatives also discussed the Voice of Taiwan, Taiwanese Buddhist charitable foundations, and other efforts to reach out to the people of North Korea through radio broadcasts or foreign aid projects. Commenting on Japanese broadcasts aimed at the DPRK, TFD Director Lin suggested the United States engage Japan directly on utilizing their resources more effectively, specifically by

using Korean rather than Japanese in radio programs targeted at the North Korean audience.

15. (C) National Chengchi University Professor Lee Ming agreed that radio broadcasts could be an effective tool in reaching the North Korean population. However, he suggested using South Koreans in the broadcasts rather than North Korean defectors. Despite having linguistic advantages, using defectors would make North Korean listeners uncomfortable and less receptive to the message since they would instinctively view the defectors as traitors to the motherland. On the other hand, Lee continued, North Koreans describing their personal experiences abroad could be helpful, but it was important to differentiate the broadcasting programs.
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